[*English*]

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOUDHURY : The facts are told. Now, the point is that even the Minister is kidnapped there. The MLAs are kidnapped. The house of the Deputy Speaker was attacked. An attempt was made to topple the Government in Meghalaya. Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee has demanded that the majority has to be proved on the Floor of the Assembly. This is the right thing to do. Now the Home Minsiter is here. The Leader of the House is also here. We want to know whether they have any knowledge of the developments that are taking place in Meghalaya. This will be an affront to the democratic process in that State if in this obnoxious manner the Government there is toppled and a defection Government of your Party is installed. I demand that you make a statement here and set the things right in Meghalaya.

[*Translation*]

*SHRI V. S. VIJAYARAGHAVAN (Palghat) : Mr. Speaker, I am raising an important matter. Onam is a national festival of the Keralites which is being celebrated this month. It is celebrated by people irrespective of caste, creed and religion. The people of Kerala are facing serious problems due to the shortage of boiled rice from whichever source available. But even ever when the Govt. manages to get some rice from some source with great difficulty, there is a shortage of wagons. The wagons available are leaking. Now this is posing aothenr problem. *I, therefore, request the Govt. to ensure* the supply of good wagons for transporting rice to Kerala.

Another problem is of non-availability of Palmolein. Immediate steps should be taken to supply Palmolein to Kerala.

Sir, as I said Onam is the national festival and the Malayalees living outside Kerala have a desire to go home and celebrate Onam. But today they are not able to go to Kerala due to inadequate train facilities. Therefore, special train should be run so that Keralites from Delhi, Bombay and other cities could reach Kerala to participate in the celebrations.

*Translation of the point originally raised in Malayalam.

Sir, there is a popular saying in Kerala that Onam should be celebrated even by selling one's own land. Such is the importance of this festival and therefore, the Govt. should take immediate steps to supply good wagons, and Palmolein as well as run special trains. The Legend says that during the region of Malabali, there was prefect equality. In the democratic age Onam provides an opportunity for people of different communities and creed to come together. So, the Govt. should facilitate it.

12.10 Hrs.

(SHRI SHARAD DIGHE IN THE CHAIR)

[*Translation*]

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer): Sir, Krishna Mill in Beawar in my constituency Ajmer has been lying closed for the last few months as a result of which thousands of labourers have been rendered jobelss. Thousands of families of these labourers are on the verge of starvation and owing to it, the economic situation in Beawar and nearby villages has worsened. The most alarming fact is that machines worth crores of rupees installed in this mill are getting rusted. The labourers have not been paid their Provident Fund. Despite the struggle, the satyagrahas and persistent demand of the labourers, the mill has not been reopened. Sir, I. therefore, request the Government through you, to hand over the Krishna Mill in Beawar either to some private parties or to the National Textile Corporation so that it could be recommissioned early and labourers could be saved from starvation.

SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR (Bareilley) : Mr. Speaker. Sir, on 31st the hon. Minister of Agriculture had made an announcement in this House that the pre-budget stocks of fertilisers available with the dealers would be sold at the old rates. But it is a matter of regret that despite this announcement this is not being done. At present the retail traders have two lakh tonnes of pre-budget stock of fertilizers and the whole sale traders have twenty lakh tonnes of Pre-budget stock of fertilizers with them. Government here manipulated and issued orders to sell two lakh tonnes of fertilisers available with the retailers at the

old rates. But regarding the twenty lakh tonnes of fertilisers with the whole sale traders, Government have issued telex orders to sell them at the new rates and I have proof in this regard. This matter needs to be clarified. The hon. Minister is not present here, but the leader of the House is present. The people of the country should not be misled on this issue. The farmers would have a burden of Rs. 200 crores on them. The farmers are already suffering because of drought and if they get this much fertilizer, it will be sufficient to meet their eighty per cent requirement. I would like the Government to make a statement on it clarifying its attitude towards farmers.

SHRI RAM PRASAD SINGH (Bikramganj): Sir, through you, I would like to draw the attention of the Government towards my constituency, Bikramganj. Sir, my constituency is mainly an agricultural area which is irrigated through the Sone Canal system. But today the entire area is affected by drought. Eighty per cent of the labourers have no work. People say that they have not seen such a severe drought in their life time. Not only my constituency, but adjacent districts like Bhojpur and Aurangabad are also affected by the drought. I urge the Government to formulate some scheme to provide relief to the drought affected people and if Government fails to do so, the labourers will die of starvation, corruption will increase and the law and order situation will deteriorate. Sir, as such I urge that the relief work should be started on a war footing to save the people from starvation.

12.17 hrs.

RE: HOSTAGE CRISIS IN ASSAM AND JAMMU AND KASHMIR.

[*English*]

SHRI CHITTA BASU (Barasat): I rise to draw the attention of the hon. Home Minister to the hostage crisis in Assam and Jammu and Kashmir which appears to have taken a very serious and dangerous turn recently.

In so far as Assam is concerned it is reported that the State Government of Assam has clarified its position that the Government have not granted general amnesty to the activists of ULFA, whereas the ULFA activists claim that the Government made that kind of an announcement on the 8th July. The ULFA demanded the release of its members, supporters and sympathisers by the 26th July in exchange of ONGC officers and other officers kept as hostages.

The State Government in a statement made only yesterday in the Legislative Assembly of Assam has stated that they have already released 432 ULFA activists detained under the TADA and only 290 detainees are there in different jails.

Two important issues arise here. The first is whether the general amnesty was at all declared as announced by the State Government of Assam. If so, why? This might have been announced after consultations with the Government of India because it relates to the fundamentalist activities, terrorist activities and secessionist activities and the State Government cannot take that kind of a decision of their own, unless they have got some kind of consent or some kind of green signal from the Government of India.

Secondly, another question that arises is, whether the Assam Government has sought for a dialogue with the ULFA. I want to know from the hon. Minister the basis of having a dialogue with ULFA. Have they indicated any basis?

These are two very important issues. Everybody is passing their days in great anxiety and anguish for the release of these ONGC officers and other officers. I want that the Minister should make a statement here and now.

I would only mention a word about Jammu and Kashmir. Today's *Indian Express* carries a news that a fresh threat to kill Mr. Doraiswamy has been issued and Mr. Doraiswamy would be killed if Mr. Shalla and others are not released by 3 p.m. today .... (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: You can speak only on one subject and not all subjects. Shri Asokaraj.

(*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

SHRI HARI KEWAL PRASAD (Salempur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, two officials of